Typed: May 22nd, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Cass Township was held on Wednesday, April 26th, 2017 at the Township’s Municipal Building, Duncott, PA.

Present at the meeting were:


James Wentz calls the meeting to order.

All recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call of Officers:


Other attendance/absentees:

Donald G. Karpowich, Solicitor – present.

Evelyn J. Bergan, Secretary / Manager – present.

William J. Kattner, Patrolman - Cass Township Police Department – present.

James states that the minutes from the March 29th, 2017 Board of Supervisor’s Meeting have been placed at each seat and he makes a motion to dispense the reading of the minutes and to accept as printed if there are no corrections or omissions. Lynn seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Unanimous Favorable Vote.

James calls for public comment on the agenda items or any other discussion.

John Lord, 20 Church Road – States that he needs the Board’s help to get 825 Forest Lane tore down. He states that the taxes have not been paid in (3) years; the house is a mess; the weeds are higher than his property’s vinyl fence; he states that he can’t sell his property because the adjacent home (825 Forest Lane) is in such bad shape. John states that he spoke to the County Commissioners and was told the all that needs to be done is for the Township Supervisors to complete some paperwork, then the County will go out and look at the property and then they can take it down. James states that the complaint was forwarded to the Township’s engineering
firm and they will take a look at the residence to start the process. Bill McMullen adds that the Code Enforcement Officer is scheduled to take a look at it tomorrow. Solicitor Karpowich states that he doesn’t want John (Lord) to be under any misunderstanding regarding the County Demolition Grant Program – after reading the guidelines, he understands that the grant funding will be only be awarded by way of court order - so unless there is a court order, the property won’t qualify for demolition under the program. Bill McMullen agrees stating that the Township has to own the property or condemn it by court order to qualify for the demolition program. Bill states there is a process that the Township will need to go through. James states that it’s not quite as easy as how it was explained. Solicitor Karpowich states that the Township doesn’t want John to be misled. James states that this is the first step in starting the process.

Christine - High Road (not listed on sign-in sheet) - States that she was in a car accident at the intersection of High Road and Low Road; she asks what are the chances of getting the left turn yield sign (to oncoming traffic) changed to a stop sign. James replies that is something that can be considered and asks Bill McMullen if he can look into it. Solicitor Karpowich adds that the engineering firm would do a study to see if it’s warranted and if there is justification for it. They will then bring it back to the Supervisors and then if they agree, in order to establish a stop sign at that location, it would have to be done by Ordinance because that is the only way to enforce it. Christine states that it is the turn that goes to the High School so it is a very busy location. James states that it is a good idea. Solicitor Karpowich states that the Township is currently in the process of making a list of all their road signs and there will be one ordinance that encompasses all of the local traffic signage. James states that he is not sure of the placement of the sign given the nature of the road. This leads to a discussion among residents and Tom Gray dus suggests a stop sign coming down (High Road). James and Lynn both state that might be a better option. It was decided that ARRO Consulting, Inc. will look at it and provide the Board with their findings.

Hearing no further questions or comments, James moves on to the items on the agenda.

2017 Road Program – Bid Opening - James states that the road program was advertised for bids and (8) bids were received. They were as follows: M&J Excavation, Inc. (Bloomsburg PA) - $80,478. New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co., Inc. (Winfield PA) - $119,306. Meckley’s Limestone Products, Inc. (Herndon PA) - $93,159. Doli Construction (Chalfont PA) - $104,935. Schuylkill Paving (Schuylkill Haven PA) - $135,459. H&K Group (Skippack PA) - $88,760.30. Ronnie C. Folk Paving, Inc. (Shoemakersville PA) - $97,450.25. Barletta Materials, Inc. (Tamaqua PA) - $107,810.30. Solicitor Karpowich asks Bill McMullen how long the bids are good. Bill responds (60) days. The Solicitor asks if the Board would like to table it or award it. Bill replies it can be awarded to the lowest responsive bidder pending ARRO’s review; he asks Attorney Karpowich to take a look at the bids as well. James makes the motion to award this project to the lowest responsive bidder pending review of the engineers and the solicitor. Elvin seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Unanimous Favorable Vote.
Insurance – RFP’s: James states that (3) proposals were received and asks the Solicitor if he would like to handle this matter. Solicitor Karpowich reads the proposals aloud; they are as follows: Halcovage Insurance Agency (Minersville PA) – Property & Liability - $30,593 and Worker’s Compensation - $49,658. Keystone Insurer’s Group (Elizabethville PA) – General Liability - $19,434 and Worker’s Compensation - $22,781 plus $18,000 for fire department coverage. Brown & Brown – General Liability - $17,823. Solicitor Karpowich states that the bids should be compared and since they are good for 45 days, the Board should table the decision; he will review/compare the proposals and have a recommendation for next month’s meeting. James makes a motion to table the RFP’s for insurance quotes. Lynn seconds. Roll Call: Unanimous Favorable Vote. Robert Gill of Keystone Insurer’s Group asked to explain and clarify his quote to the Board regarding the WC and Fire Departments – which he did.

Road Department – Part-time As Needed New Hire: James states that once again it is necessary to hire for the road department for summer maintenance work so the Board is hiring a part-time as needed road crew worker at $15.00 per hour. Applications have been received so the Board reviewed them and found that Matthew Harris would be a good candidate for the position. He is experienced with grass cutting and maintenance type work. James asks for a motion to hire Matthew Harris; part-time as needed – no benefits – at a rate of $15.00 per hour. Solicitor Karpowich states that the number of hours worked per week is not exceed (30) hours. Elvin makes the motion. James seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Unanimous Favorable Vote.

Treasurer’s Report: Lynn reads the report. James makes a motion to accept the Treasurer’s report as read and to pay all outstanding bills as can be paid at this time. Elvin seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Unanimous Favorable Vote. All Treasurer Reports are kept on file in the Township Office for review upon request.

Planning Commission: James states that there is no action (by the Board) needed this month, however, there is a submission for Wegmans so there will be a May 11th, 2017 Planning Commission Meeting. Also, there will be a Zoning Meeting held on May 2nd, 2017.

Police Department: Patrolman William Kattner reads the report submitted by Chief Richard Clink. James calls for a motion to accept the police report as read. Lynn makes the motion. James seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Unanimous Favorable Vote. All police reports are kept on file in the Police Station for review upon request.

Road Foreman’s Report: Elvin reads the report. James makes a motion to accept the Road Foreman’s Report as read. Lynn seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Unanimous Favorable Vote. All Road Foreman Reports are kept on file in the Township Office for review upon request.
Correspondence:

PennDOT Bridge Rehabilitation Project – James states that there is a display set-up in the back of the room; the State is going to be doing a bridge rehabilitation project on Mount Laffee Road located by the Reading Anthracite Breaker. The Township was asked to set-up the materials. The public is encouraged to ask questions and submit comments regarding the project – survey forms have been provided. Everyone is encouraged to review the plans.

Old / New Business:

Street Sign Ordinance - James states that as Solicitor Karpowich had mentioned, the Township is still working on the Street Sign Ordinance.

Solicitor Karpowich states that there are structures that need to be razed/demolished within the Township and the problem is that the properties are owned by Reading Anthracite Company so Code Enforcement (ARRO Consulting, Inc.) issued Notices of Violation to the land owner who then filed an appeal. The Solicitor contacted their counsel and provided him with a listing of structures (prepared by Code Enforcement) that need to be razed. Reading Anthracite Company is now going to review the list and get back to the Township with some type of resolution to avoid prosecution. If nothing is heard back from them by next week, the Solicitor states that he will schedule an Appeals Board Hearing on the evening of the next meeting – to take place following the regular meeting. He asks the audience if that sounds okay. Tom Graydus states that it sounds fine – they need to take responsibility. Solicitor Karpowich states that the Township is trying to work through this without getting into litigation, but the Township Supervisors are not afraid to prosecute because RAC is the property owner and these homes are abandoned and dilapidated and there are several of them throughout the Township that need to come down. He feels ARRO Consulting, Inc. is taking an aggressive approach and after contacting Reading Anthracite’s counsel, he is hoping that they commit the resources in both labor and materials to make sure the structures come down. He states that if they don’t and we can’t come to a compromise, we’ll schedule for a hearing and move forward with prosecution.

Fee schedules – Solicitor Karpowich states that he feels the zoning and building permit fees are too high – he gives examples of both residential and commercial fees – he states that these fees are the highest he’s ever seen and he and ARRO will work on this and bring a recommendation next month for a comprehensive fee schedule – instead of having separate fee schedules, there will be (1) fee schedule. He goes on to explain another item that may be addressed stating that the building permit ordinance should also be repealed and a new one adopted that gives exemptions under State Law which means that building permits would not be required in certain instances; he gives examples. Bill McMullen expresses his opinion on fees as well. Solicitor Karpowich states that next month the Board will need to make a motion to repeal and replace the current Ordinance.
James asks if there are any further questions.

Chris Ternowchek, Flag Lane – Asked the location of the road program. James replies Woodside Road – from Forest Lane to Kopinetz’s – approximately 2300 feet of paving.

Motion to Adjourn: With no further business, James asks for a motion to adjourn. Elvin seconds. James seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Unanimous Favorable Vote.

Meeting adjourned.

ATTEST: James A. Wentz, Chairman
TIME MEETING ENDED: 7:11 PM

SEAL:

ATTEST: Elvin E. Brennan, Jr., Vice-Chairman
TIME MEETING ENDED: 7:11PM

The next regular monthly meeting of the Cass Township Board of Supervisors will be held on Wednesday, May 31st, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. at the Municipal Building, Duncott, PA.